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SEPTEMBER 22, 2023 | VOLUME 14 | ISSUE 20

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ARPA funds pilot guranteed income
in Ann Arbor. **Page 7**

AMANDA GALE
#573

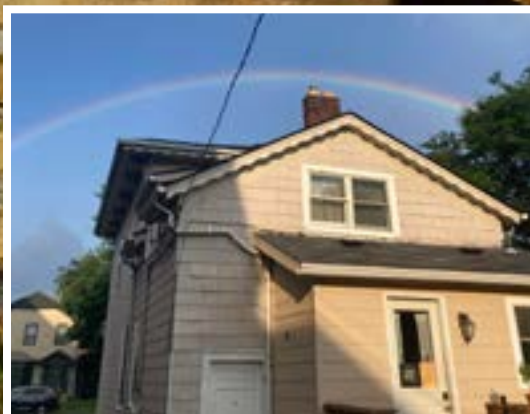


ASK YOUR VENDOR:
IF YOU COULD
GO ANYWHERE,
WHERE WOULD
YOU GO?

GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP | WASHTENAW COUNTY, MICH.

Happy anniversary to four 'MISSION' community houses — Jimmy Hill House, Mercy House, Peace House and Hospitality House. page 4



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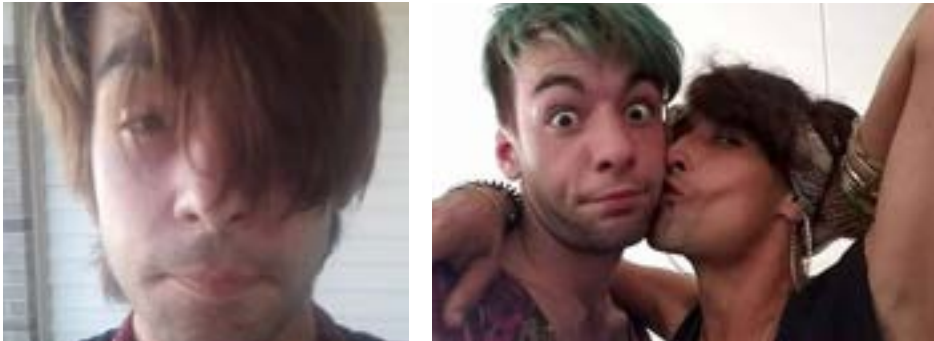
Reid "Kit" Warling

May 21, 1995 - September 15, 2023

Reid Warling passed away on September 15, 2023 at the age of 28. Beloved son of Neal and Suzanne Warling. Dear brother of May, Jackson, Michael and Matthew. Loving nephew of aunt Denise and uncle David Ricketts, uncle Kenneth Warling, aunt Vicki Derry and aunt Ann Bugnon. Cherished uncle of Charles Feight. Caring cousin of Reese Ricketts. Reid is also survived by friends Jessie Cane and Kevin Jones.

Reid, vendor No. 395, started selling Groundcover News in 2018 and sold the paper on and off over the years.

Reid was a very talented poet and actor. If you were lucky enough to hear him singing you would be truly blown away by his voice. He had a passion for reading, spending some time being a part of a book club. Reid was known for his kind heart, gentle personality, love for animals, and his intelligence. Reid is loved deeply and will be missed fiercely.



Reid and Jessie Cane (right).



GROUNDCOVER NEWS

CREATING **OPPORTUNITY** AND A **VOICE** FOR LOW-INCOME PEOPLE WHILE TAKING ACTION TO END HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY.

Groundcover News, a 501(c)(3) organization, was founded in April 2010 as a means to empower low-income persons to make the transitions from homeless to housed, and from jobless to employed.

Vendors purchase each copy of our regular editions of Groundcover News at our office for 50 cents. This money goes towards production costs. Vendors work selling the paper on the street for \$2, keeping all income and tips from each sale.

Street papers like Groundcover News exist in cities all over the United States, as well as in more than 40 other countries, in an effort to raise awareness of the plight of homeless people and combat the increase in poverty. Our paper is a proud member of the International Network of Street Papers.

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1/4	\$200.00	\$265.00	5 X 6.25
1/2	\$375.00	\$500.00	5 X 13 or 10.25 X 6.5
full page	\$650.00	\$900.00	10.25 X 13

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Full Year/Twenty-four Issues: **35%** off
Only run for two weeks/one issue: **40%** off
Additional **20%** discount for money saving coupons

ASK YOUR VENDOR

If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go?

Anywhere that has a lot of people that are passionate about Jesus, and anywhere that has had a genuine Christian revival. But I am happy to stay right where I am, for now.
— Amanda Gale, #573

Probably Hawaii or somewhere like that — tropical.
— Glen Page, #407

Yukon, Canada. Go visit my tribe, hang out with the bears, run with the wolves, disappear forever.
— Cindy Gere, #279

Amsterdam. Everything's legal there.
— Pony Bush, #305

Nowhere. I stay here.
— Roberto Isla Caballero, #347

I want to hunt down the most poisonous things in the world: Australia, China, Africa. But China first!
— Teresa Basham, #570

If I ever get out of here, I'm going to Katmandu!
— Ken Parks, #490

Somewhere where a nuclear bomb won't hit me. I'd like to work with animals, maybe in Argentina or somewhere in South America.
— Terri Demar, #322

My own private island. Or Malta.
— Joe Woods, #103

First choice is Machu Picchu but the Amazon scares the hell out of me. The Black Forest in Germany is up there, too.
— James Manning, #16

Toss up between Egypt and Japan.
— Justen White, #543

Greece.
— Derek Allen, #177

Would you consider making nonviolence and kindness "cool?"

JANE REILLY
Groundcover vendor No.611

In 2020, Reverend Al Sharpton wrote in "Rise Up, Confronting a Country at the Crossroads," that he was lectured by both Shirley Chisholm and Coretta Scott King for his language. Chisholm was the first Black woman elected to Congress and ran for President, and King was an activist for civil rights, apartheid abolition, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer rights, and the wife of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

King said, "Al, don't you realize words have power? You've got to learn to filter what you say for the long-term gain and not sell it for the short-term satisfaction of being theatrical or getting attention. Otherwise, you could win the crowd but lose the crown."

Sharpton, the founder and President of the National Action Network and a civil rights and social justice activist, defended himself by saying, "I didn't mean anything by it; it was just the way we spoke on the streets." And, "I was just speaking in the rhythm and style of the times."

Sharpton wrote that his friends who are rappers and singers say it is free speech to use the B-word and N-word in their songs. They also use the F- and MF-words,

which both have violent sexual connotations. They use many slurs against all people.

Sharpton's reply: "Do the record execs let you use that language on them? Then, why is it OK for us to denigrate our own community, our sisters? We're doing their work for them."

Why is it OK to denigrate anyone? Today there is hatred towards everyone who is different than the status quo. It is tearing our country apart.

The use of hate speech is helping divide our country. Some in the Black community have told me the N-word means, "family." I believe when bigots hear it, it encourages more hatred.

Hate speech is more than being vulgar and rude. Hate speech turns words into weapons to harm others. In *Watts v. United States* (1969), the Supreme Court held that the First Amendment does not protect profanity spoken as part of a true threat, such as profane rants that cross the line into direct face-to-face personal insults, according to the Free Speech Center at Middle Tennessee University. It is also a misdemeanor in the state of Michigan under penal code 750.167 section F for a disorderly person.

When people hear the same negative words repeated constantly, their

brains believe it is the truth. That's very dangerous. People with low self esteem — bullies — need to be macho and tough. It sometimes leads to violence. Adults don't need to be bullies to be "cool." Some rap is music for and by bullies because the music industry makes billions of dollars from hate speech. According to Sharpton, the rappers say they need the N-word, B-word and F-MF-words to show they have "street cred." We don't have to imitate it.

Marc Morial, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Urban League told CNN.com, "The N-word has never had a positive meaning." The National Urban League is America's largest historic civil rights and urban advocacy organization.

Singer Jose Feliciano played the National Anthem on acoustic guitar at the 1968 Major League Baseball World Series in a Latin style and Jimi Hendrix played a spectacular instrumental version of the Star Spangled Banner on his electric guitar at Woodstock in 1969. At the time, these were monumental acts of courage. Feliciano and Hendrix tried to use their creativity to bring people together.

We, too, have the power to create change and bring people together. Together we can make kindness and non-violence "cool."

From the desk of Panda: Thank you to our supporters!

Dear public, I feel the need to finally — from all of us at Groundcover, from each individual who has now worked on a daily basis and even the former vendors — tell you from our hearts and souls: One big thank you for all you have done to support and help the vendors and paper!

Thank you to our patrons and regulars who consistently keep us going. If it was not for you, many of us would have hung up our hats long ago. You kept us going through the COVID-19 pandemic and even to this very day.

Thank you to all the new buyers. Meeting new people willing to discover and read the paper helps us out more than you know. I always



CINDY GERE
Groundcover vendor No. 279

find new buyers who want to know how the papers help us individually and what Groundcover is about. New people change the level of our sales.

Thank you to the volunteers who take the time out to help at events

and booths who represent the paper. You are all invaluable gems that keep on shining bright to the world.

Thanks to the University of Michigan students who give their study time to volunteer in the building daily; you keep us smiling on gloomy days and keep us happy going to work.

Thanks to the board for having the courage to continue and change lives each and every day. Because the struggle is real on a case by case basis. We at Groundcover have our good days and bad days just like you. Just know deep down we thank you for all you have given each of us.

God bless you!

Happy anniversary to four 'MISSION' community houses — Jimmy Hill House, Mercy House, Peace House and Hospitality House

WILL SHAKESPEARE
Groundcover vendor No. 258

Jimmy Hill House

This month Washtenaw County community members can join us to wish Jimmy Hill House, Mercy House, Peace House and Hospitality House happy birthdays. The wise people of the world say, "Gratitude is a memory of the heart." Thousands of people have received help or life-saving assistance at the four community houses under the umbrella known as MISSION (Michigan Itinerant Shelter System Interdependent Out of Necessity). Most human beings tend to remember the times and places where they received much needed help to survive and begin a fresh start. So, HAPPY BIRTHDAYS! JOYEUX ANNIVERSAIRE — in French!!

Historical Antecedents

In June 2010 the Michigan Department of Transportation evicted 78 homeless individuals from the organized encampment in Washtenaw County "Camp Take Notice." CTN was informed that their homeless camp site belonged to MDOT and campers were forced to leave. After the eviction, some of the stranded campers received housing locally, some were accepted to stay temporarily at the Delonis Center and many found camping grounds in several locations in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. Due to the eviction CTN lost its ability to hold Sunday dinner meetings sponsored by St. Mary's Student Parish of Ann Arbor, other churches in Scio Township and Dexter. The leaders of CTN felt that their social movement had collapsed.

A parishioner of St. Mary's who actively supported CTN pre-eviction came to the rescue. Peggy Lynch wholeheartedly opened the doors of her Burns Park home to CTN members who wished to maintain the weekly Sunday dinner meetings. About six or seven homeless people were invited to stay in her house. It is fair to say that Ms. Peggy resurrected CTN from the dead, and gave it new life and new hope to carry on.

It was at Peggy's Burns Park home on White Street where CTN reconstituted its board membership and worked with Peggy and others to create a homeless community organization known as MISSION.

The first task of MISSION was to raise money in order to buy a three acre property on Stone School Road so that CTN residents who had scattered could have a permanent place for Sunday dinner meetings, board meetings, laundry, showers, picking donated clothing and receiving medical services. MISSION received a anonymous donation to purchase the property and their intention was to reestablish CTN on their own land. It is still the intention of the MISSION board to establish a tiny house community on this piece of property.

The building was first nicknamed the "Purple House" due to its brightly painted exterior. It is now called Jimmy Hill House in honor of the now-deceased exemplary leader who helped guide CTN and served as MISSION Board President. Jimmy Hill House was acquired in the fall of 2012.

Many people don't know this, but Jimmy Hill lived under the U.S. 23 bridge near Carpenter Road for five years before Caleb Poirier invited him into Camp Take Notice on Wagner Road. Jimmy Hill was a natural leader and instantly became one of the favorites at Camp Take Notice. Jimmy Hill led weekly camp meetings, he helped new residents learn the art of winter survival and provided residents with hours of entertainment, regaling them with stories about his colorful past.

Jimmy Hill continued to show leadership, when MISSION acquired the Stone School Road property and even helped choose the distinctive color scheme which has become a trademark of MISSION. Jimmy Hill rose to be the first homeless president of MISSION and is still loved by many today. His slogan was so simple and yet so powerful, "It is what it is." Many Camp Take Notice friends had this slogan tattooed to their forearms after he passed.

Nowadays Jimmy Hill House hosts the Weather Amnesty Survival Program which provides emergency shelter from November to April to individuals trespassed from other overnight warming shelters.

Mercy House

Mercy House of Ann Arbor was opened as a private home of Ms. Peggy in September 2013. She sold her Burns Park home and moved to a house in Ann Arbor's West Side which is close



Jimmy Hill Memorial House in 2012, before renovation.

to the Robert J. Delonis Center. Peggy and Sheri Wander, a peace advocate and resident of CTN, wanted to provide social services modeled after Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker Movement, along with Jane Addam's "Hull House" social work project for addressing the needs of the poor, the hungry and the destitute on Chicago's West Side.

The Mercy House location is still a private home that works in partnership with MISSION. This month, it is celebrating its ten-year anniversary. Many community members have been to Mercy House on Saturday for "Peggy's pancakes" or their annual Christmas party.

Peace House

The Peace House of Ypsilanti was opened by Sheri Wander and her partner Patrick Jones in September 2018. This month, we celebrate their fifth anniversary. Peace House Ypsi is a house of hospitality in the tradition of Dorothy Day, Peter Maurin and the Catholic Worker movement. Their mission is simply to love. By providing hospitality, nonviolently resisting injustice and living in solidarity with those on the margins, their mission is to build the world they envision by living it! Peace House has supported the creation of grassroots community projects Pull Over Prevention and Pet Pals Mutual Aid.

Hospitality House Ypsi

The newest house created under the umbrella of MISSION is Hospitality House, located in downtown Ypsilanti. September marks the first year anniversary of Hospitality House. The house is blessed with three capable and energetic leaders: Lindsay, Ben and Lauren. The house offers temporary shelter and has open hours twice a week for laundry, showers, meals

and social time and is the homebase for the work of Washtenaw Camp Outreach.

We are delighted to celebrate the anniversaries of Jimmy Hill House, Mercy House, Peace House and Hospitality House. All four houses exist to help the homeless and housing-insecure community members. Wise people say, "Rome was not built in a day." It has taken a lot of "sweat equity," "talent equity" and the sacrifices of church volunteers, student volunteers and other members of the community to make lives better and hopeful for the homeless of Washtenaw County.

Final words from Brian Durrance, MISSION board member

The first part of our MISSION acronym describes our organization's purpose. The words, "Michigan Itinerant Shelter System," acknowledge the basic truth that it takes a village to house the homeless. Many live in tents, some in tent cities, many in public housing, hotels — and many live in houses which have been opened in love. Houses like the Jimmy Hill Memorial are now joined by Mercy House, Peace House and Hospitality House thanks to the gracious efforts of activists like Peggy Lynch and Sheri Wander.

The second part of our MISSION acronym is our slogan, "Interdependent out of Necessity." These words boldly declare that we are a family. Homeless people needing assistance with food, shelter, clothing meet in the middle with those who come to assist. We are drawn to each other in love, each fulfilling a powerful personal need. MISSION began as a small camp behind the Arborland Mall; now it is a family which has grown larger and stronger and has survived over 15 years. And we are powered by pure love!

This is the real

D.A.
Groundcover contributor

I can not see how so many can limit themselves.

What I mean is, I am an individual, yet, as I'm a singular being.

I'm not divided by this life I've lived, nor by a fragmented society of people we call our world.

I'd like to say this, so that perhaps, someone will hear me and understand. If you've never been broken, you can't be rebuilt.

Maybe the Mason that laid your foundation, not the beginning.

I still say it, and I say it again.

I'm an individual who is, has been, broken...

I'm now choosing to stand up again.

I may not have the endings or endings ...

That can all depend.

Let me get back to what I mean, what I'm attempting to convey, as I stand here giving you a taste.

When you use the other eye.

Use your own imagination.

Catch a glimpse of another mindset.

It's not just me, we can all feel misled, misunderstood, even be misguided in the midst of our very own thinking.

Autumn rain

RONALD PAGERESKI
Groundcover contributor

Rain is falling
sun is nowhere in sight.

Autumn is calling
we'll see, many a chilly night.

On the street the poor will walk,
disdain of them will be the talk.

But many have met bad luck
felt like run over by a truck.

Reach out to them,
some kindness share.

At least show them
that there are those who care.

Rain is falling, taking a toll,
rain is falling in someone's soul.

A day in the life of Earl

EARL PULLEN
Groundcover contributor

A mastermind
never forsakes
his self for
fortune or fame
but for the dignity
honor and safety
of his people
as a whole

Sinner or a saint

EARL PULLEN

Some say I'm a
Sinner some say

I'm a saint

I am what I am and I am

What I aint —

My light shines

Better than

A fresh coat of paint

This is the story of a

Sinner or a saint

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FEATURED RESOURCE

Visit the "Colorful Dream" exhibit

Through Oct. 20, visit the "A Colorful Dream" exhibit at the Whittaker Road branch! Scan the QR code to learn more:



FEATURED EVENT

BEVERLY JENKINS
AUTHOR TALK

October 28 | 1-3pm

Spark East (215 W. Michigan Ave)

Beverly Jenkins, prolific author of over 30 African American historical romances, will be reading from her newest book, *A Christmas Blessing*. She will also introduce authors Elle Wright, Zig Zag Claybourne, Marsalis Higgs, and Aliza Mann. Black Stone Book Store and Cultural Center will provide books for sale.

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The obvious uphill battle for a future with clean energy

Discussions are an everyday occurrence in our lives covering every conceivable topic and our opinions therein. Being one of the billions of inhabitants of this world negatively affected by the power-hungry corporate tyrants who have no concern over consequences, I often find myself childishly complaining about such soulless people in conversation — people who intentionally stand in the way of a better civilization and the overall planet. So I find myself expressing my disgust for those whose desires can never be satisfied and how alien such an existence is to my own.

What really shocks me is the fact that these few people who hold the entire world hostage are quite clearly outnumbered by their victims. Yeah, we seem unable or unwilling at times to get up and knock these jerks off their seats of power. Just to clarify, I don't speak of people who are simply affluent. I'm talking about real monsters who got us dependent on their energy sources. My belief is these people are those who can control the energy market — more specifically the corporate corruptors who run the fossil fuels industry. These are the true power holders of the earth, not the social elite, not politicians and not even Elon Musk. I shouldn't need to point out that when it comes to



JAMES MANNING
Groundcover vendor No. 16

clean alternative environmental-blessing energy I think it's highly unlikely these guys are willing to embrace it.

Today we have several means of renewable and clean energy and anyone with half a brain has asked the question, "Why the hell aren't we replacing the destructive burning of fossil fuels with it?" The first issue is that it can be very hard to just replace a current, tried-and-true, effective system for our energy needs, however finite it may be.

I do feel that people who run this industry hold world-ending power though and I think they might be the type that if they go down they will take the whole damn planet with them. Also that level of power would probably require a planet-sized intervention to even challenge it. But we obviously can't just wait around until

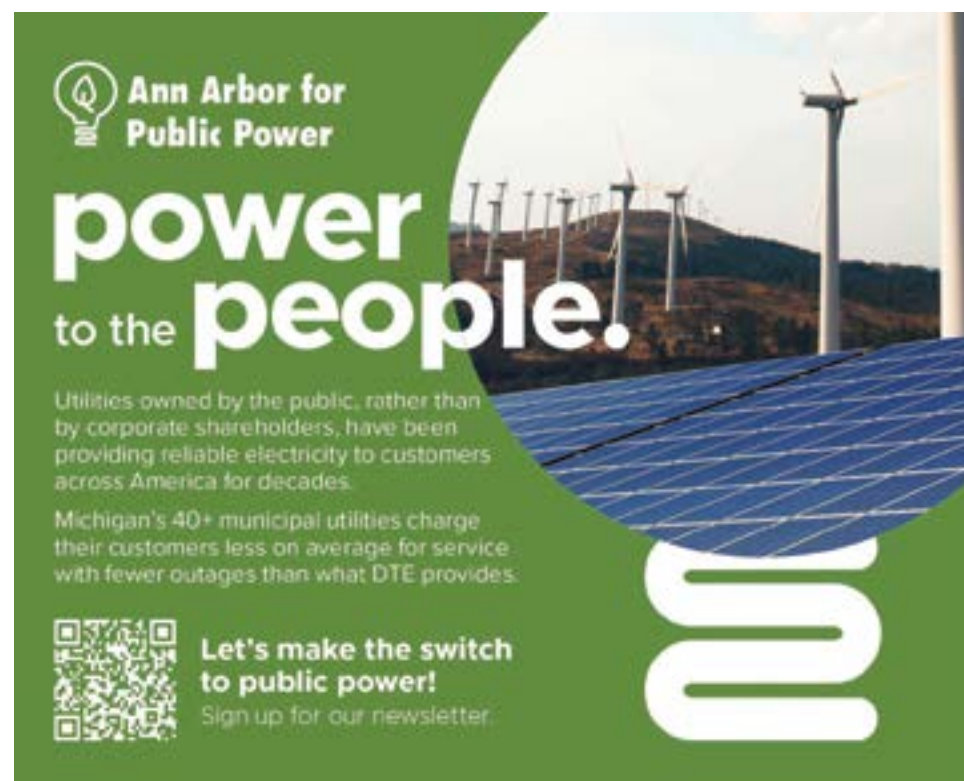
all the oil is gone — especially because the damage it's doing is very apparent. Worst of all, it may already be too late for anything we do to even matter.

But man, it would be an understatement to say that a person who finds their own wealth and self-interest as more important than the world's and the human race's interest "pisses me off." I don't care how poor and unimportant people find me, being angry is one right I have that

nobody can deprive me of and I know I'm in the right on this one. It's such a shame the situation is more complex than the solution being one big giant revolt descending on these people and dragging them down in the street.

But sadly nothing is ever solved by such simplistic methods and certainly not when dealing with the corporate giants of any kind. And finally

see **ENERGY** page 8 ➡



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Washtenaw County Community Mental Health

ARPA funds pilot guaranteed income in Ann Arbor

As part of the 2021 COVID-19 American Rescue Plan Act, Ann Arbor received \$24 million. The City was given until the end of September 2026 to use the funds. An online survey and live question-and-answer session were conducted to gather a sense of how city residents wanted to see the funds spent.

After hearing from several groups, the council made its decision this past April as to who would receive the funding. Although it is obvious that the pandemic increased the numbers of what is already a horrific humanitarian crisis known as homelessness, the bulk of the funding went to other projects.

With the dire impact that was felt by those who were or became unhoused during the pandemic, it seems that it would have been the families on the streets who would have been most concerning to the city.

For example, during the pandemic, the hotline for the shelter system failed and had to be retooled after getting backlogged with over 2,000 calls. Washtenaw District Judge Erane Washington lamented in a virtual presentation to the Washtenaw County Democratic Party that evictions were "piling up" due to the "astronomical" increases in rent. The judge noted that following her vacation she processed over 30 evictions, leaving families nowhere to go except the streets.

These families added to the numbers of people who are "living in circumstances not fit for human habitation" as defined by the federal government. Yet, as it turned out, only around 25% of the funds were applied to a crisis that grew within this crisis. Not only did the numbers of people experiencing homelessness increase, but the conditions of those who were already unhoused became worse.



ELIZABETH "LIT" KURTZ
Groundcover vendor No. 159

Despite disappointing funding for those who are essentially left in the elements, a promising initiative for those who are struggling through homelessness emerged, a guaranteed income pilot program. It will help not only the unhoused, but those who are living in extreme poverty or poverty. Although the council approved the University of Michigan Guaranteed Income for Ann Arbor or "Gig A2," it was not without challenges which included having the \$2,300,000 dollar allotment reduced to \$1,600,000. Those who can apply for the no-strings-attached funding are those who are, according to MLive, "... self-employed people, owners of formal or informal small businesses, gig workers and people with side hustles who have low incomes."

From there, 200 applicants will be chosen as participants with half receiving the \$528 monthly payments and the other half serving as a control group. Every participant will be paid \$50 for completed questionnaires. Associate Director of the program, U-M Social Work Professor Kristin Seefeldt, stated that whether or not an individual is chosen for the monthly check, it is important that each group participate in order to get a true understanding of the effectiveness of the study.

GUARANTEED INCOME TO GROW ANN ARBOR (GIG A2)

Are you an Ann Arbor entrepreneur, small business owner, gig worker, or someone with a side hustle?

Eligible participants must be:

- Ann Arbor residents
- At least 18 years old
- Engaged in some sort of business activity (this can be formal or informal that you spend approximately five hours a month on)
- Have income at or below 225% of the federal poverty line, which is \$55,935 for a three-person household

The City of Ann Arbor, in partnership with the University of Michigan, is launching Guaranteed Income to Grow Ann Arbor, which will provide payments of \$528 a month for 24 months to 100 eligible, randomly selected individuals and study its effects.

Learn more about the program and apply: GIGa2.org
For questions: AnnArborGuaranteedIncome@umich.edu

One of the most passionate proponents of the program was Councilwoman Linh Song who is eager to see the pilot up and running and is hopeful that when the funding expires, the city will continue it in the future.

The Michigan Daily reported Song as saying that she "... hopes it will demonstrate that folks who struggle, work very very hard and work multiple jobs, are the cornerstones of their communities."

Momentum for guaranteed income may be gaining as Los Angeles, California, conducted a similar pilot in 2022. The aptly named program,

BREATHE, selected 1,000 participants to receive \$1,000 per month for three years. It is the sentiment of many programs leaning towards "unconditional income" that poverty and extreme poverty do not allow people to, well, breathe.

The GigaA2 program in Ann Arbor along with BREATHE in LA may provide evidence of what many have known all along. Unconditional giving may be the best way to give after all.

For those who are interested in the *Guaranteed Income for Ann Arbor study*, the details can be found by visiting its website: <https://giga2.org>.

St. Francis of Assisi Parish

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Financial empowerment center launches in Washtenaw County

JOSHUA LEE
Groundcover contributor

In a significant move to enhance the financial well-being of Washtenaw County's residents, the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development, in partnership with the national Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund, has announced the grand opening of the Washtenaw County Financial Empowerment Center. This initiative offers professional, one-on-one financial counseling and coaching as a free public service to local residents.

The FEC model integrates financial counseling seamlessly into various social services, including but not limited to housing and foreclosure prevention, workforce development, prisoner reentry, benefits access, and domestic violence services. This holistic approach aims to create a comprehensive and sustainable program that uplifts the community towards greater economic stability.

County Commissioner Justin Hodge, who represents District 5 and is Chair of the Board of Commissioners, emphasized the significance of this initiative, stating, "A Financial Empowerment Center is a transformative initiative that will help empower Washtenaw County residents with the tools and guidance needed to conquer their financial challenges and envision brighter futures for themselves and

their families."

The FECs are staffed with rigorously trained counselors who provide one-on-one support to individuals with low to moderate incomes. Their mission is to assist clients in managing finances, reducing debt, increasing savings, and establishing strong credit. By investing in financial counseling as a tool serving a critical public need, Washtenaw County is taking a proactive stance in bolstering the success of various social services, ultimately creating a more economically stable community.

To cater to the diverse needs of the community, the Washtenaw County FEC offers both in-person and virtual appointments. Moreover, the Office of Community and Economic Development has joined forces with three community organizations, enabling clients to access services at four convenient locations:

- The Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development, 415 W. Michigan Ave., Ypsilanti.
 - Faith in Action, 7275 Joy Rd., Dexter.
 - Jewish Family Services, 2245 S. State St., Ann Arbor.
 - Eastern Michigan University, University Advising and Career Development Center, 878 Cross St., Ypsilanti, 200 McKenny Hall.
- Clients interested in making an appointment can do so via the Wash-

tenaw County FEC website, washtenaw.org/FEC

The Financial Empowerment Center is expected to become a cornerstone of accessible financial services in the Washtenaw community. It will not only complement existing programs offered by community partners but also enhance them. Faith in Action, one of the co-locations, shared their perspective on this development in a press release, emphasizing the significance of financial education in supporting households that struggle with money. "Being able to connect clients with individualized financial counseling and education is a great tool and is a part of creating more success financially for these households."

Partnering with community organizations is a key aspect of the FEC model. This collaboration streamlines access to financial services for vulnerable populations who are already utilizing services from partner organizations. It effectively creates a "one-stop-shop" for community members, removing barriers to access.

The Financial Empowerment Center initiative extends its reach to the Eastern Michigan University community. Jessica "Decky" Alexander, Director of co-location Engage@EMU, highlighted the importance of this service for students. "We know that finances is one of the most consistent barriers to accessing and persisting through college, our hope is that the FEC will

be a space and place to remove such barriers for years to come."

Similarly, Elina Zilberberg, Chief Operating Officer of co-location Jewish Family Services, emphasized the value of having this resource in their building. FEC counselors will be readily accessible to anyone needing help with personal finances, budgeting, and creating a solid financial plan. This service is expected to benefit both clients and members of the community as they seek wrap-around services from JFSWC.

The FEC model has a proven track record of success across the United States. First piloted in New York City under Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg in 2008, FECs have collectively worked with almost 150,000 clients. These centers have helped individuals reduce individual debt by over \$225 million and increase their families' savings by close to \$45 million.

An evaluation conducted by the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund demonstrated the effectiveness of the program, even for residents with very low incomes and other complex financial challenges. Washtenaw County joins several dozen local governments across the nation in launching or planning to launch their local FEC initiatives. The Washtenaw County FEC is made possible through support from the CFE Fund and American Rescue Plan Funds.

➡ **ENERGY** from page 6

there's the fact that these are the largest players of financial might the world has ever seen. I sometimes like to believe that people with such unimaginable power and resources will possess more lofty ideas for future industries that would ensure continued prosperity for the collective human race.

Yet while some do make good use of their position, a great many more just hoard useless crap to show off with, then assign it to obscure storage-bound junk. And this is some valuable stuff — art that's not looked at or appreciated, cars not driven, homes not lived in and so forth.

So I sometimes wonder to myself if these people ever give a thought to or experience any concern for their future. I mean there are possible catastrophes of a large enough scale to render everything they have

worthless. Just because nothing has happened yet doesn't make the possibility of such an event non-existent. But if I were to bet on anything that would guarantee unity amongst humankind ... it would be an epic global tragedy.

I'm never entirely sure if I'm truly happy to be alive and experience this particular stretch of time in humanity's progress. Obviously I live pretty comfortably compared to countless lives spent during more chaotic and unforgiving times. But with myself being a fan of science fiction, I would have loved to know the capabilities we would be permitted to achieve if we continue advancing throughout the coming years. And I mean achievements of mankind alone — without any interventions be them alien or divine.

I have to say though, however undecided I feel about that, I do feel pretty damn privileged. I feel this way

because I'm a sci-fi geek at heart and I get to witness some pretty important milestones in the environment in the advancement of technology. This is all just one small part as well as a subject I have some interest in. I utilize this to maintain positivity in my life.

I believe a crucial part of life for any sentient being capable of emotion is being able to live with oneself. It certainly helps knowing right from wrong and possessing a reasonable and healthy viewpoint — something entirely your own and not what the external World deems necessary.

That is why I choose to share these environmental concerns that I'm thankful not alone in: to highlight perhaps the world's greatest environmental offenders and the gross negligence they demonstrate for the sake of corporate gain. The fact is, we indeed do possess less destructive alternatives yet have an inability to

challenge and ultimately supplant such tyrants. And now it seems too great a coincidence that such a threat thrives in the absence of global and social unity. That pitting the common people against each other to ensure we remain divided and consequently powerless is such an effective yet obvious strategy.

I feel it important to generate awareness of such a grim topic for several reasons, but I think my favorite would be the David versus Goliath irony. If I, myself being such an impoverished and unimportant element, actually kick-started a movement that would culminate in global superpowers' ruin ... I would continue to hope such dreams will someday manifest in reality. Regardless of whatever scornful prejudices are aimed at me, I can at least sleep at night.

The bees are back

A beautiful thing that I have been seeing lately is the abundance of buzzing activity in the flower beds during my walks. Sadly, summer is winding down, and I have been trying to enjoy it by maximizing my walks. As I battled with a lot of things in the past few years, for some reason I always managed to keep track of bee news, whether it be bee Colony Collapse Disease, large sectors of agriculture shutting down due to the loss of the prime pollinator, bee colonies being devastated by pesticides (thank you Monsanto) or suffering from mite attacks, loss of habitat and global warming.

While walking through Gallup Park the other day, as I was prepping my medication, a 420-friendly bee came and landed right on my medical flower. He seemed cool; I tried to explain to him/her that this flower was already cured and didn't need pollination. He just smiled and calmly flew away — he might have caught a contact high, at least I hope so. I hope he got some respite from his pollinator activities. Then there was another bee that tried



MOHAMMED ALMUSTAPHA
Groundcover contributor

to attack me while I was inhaling my medication and I ended up having to fumigate him with my own lungs.

I am extremely ecstatic that the bee population in Michigan is becoming noticeably more noticeable. I hope that the population throughout the world rebounds so that agriculture can flourish. The more organic we are, the better we will be. Our state depends heavily on agriculture. As an avid lover of Michigan cherries, boy I am happy the bees are back.

The increased buzzful activity led me to googling: What is the status of the

global bee population? Is the Colony Collapse Disorder still spreading havoc? Are the bees still suffering from loss of habitat and pesticides and mite attacks?

To my awesome happy surprise, I got to read that the efforts of beekeepers seeking to mitigate the loss and the decline of the bee population in the United States have been successful. These beautiful people have been putting intense effort into making sure that the bee colonies of this country stay thriving. Their efforts have paid great dividends. So, to all of you out there throughout the lands of this beautiful nation, thank you for making sure that our bees are surviving, thriving, and happily twerking away the day on our pretty native Michigan flowers.

I hope we all get to see them every summer on and on. It really is a beautiful sight; if you ever walk by a flower bed or a bush and you hear buzzing activities, just stop and look — look at them work, not worrying about nothing, not worrying about all the urban warfare that is being perpetrated on them.

No pesticides, no mites, no colony collapse disease, no fumigations have been able to put them down because they know what they must do when they are doing it and God bless them for it. I love your sweet honey; I love what you do for the flowers; and I love that you get to fly being productive all day. And I am happy to say that I have never been stung by a bee, which means me and the bees be homies. (But if I do get stung, I will not hold it against you bees.) I am simply happy that your population is thriving here, and I hope that it thrives globally. Amen.

May you all go on to pollinate all throughout the world blessing us with non-GMO, non-pesticide, non-monetized, beautiful, organic, whole fruits and vegetables. And of course, most importantly, honey, which goes good as a snack with cream cheese spread over any flat bread of any kind. Amen.

"Striving to be a better man today than I was yesterday, and a better man tomorrow than I am today."

My 80th year

My 80th birthday, celebrated last October, was a benchmark event in my life. Friends Meeting House was the perfect location and my friends Luiz and Elliott did the preparation that made it natural and simple. It did not follow the proposed plan of open mic and dancing because the many smaller conversations were so much more vibrant and better than the original plan. I think everyone met someone new and experienced themselves as born again in a positive social context. The food was wonderful and plentiful, as is common with community based potlucks.

Quakers, Mennonites and Brethren are the three historic peace churches and each has a place in my life. They prepared me to have a relationship with the civil and social rights movements of the 1960s. Meeting Thich Nhat Hanh, the Vietnamese Buddhist monk who Martin Luther King nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize, inspired me to be a draft resister on April 3, 1968. King was assassinated the next day.

His speeches are sacred relics of American history. Beyond Vietnam is required listening for those who want to know the essence of that time in history. What we face today is not a repeat of the past but it rhymes with all songs of freedom. The intensity of wealth



KEN PARKS
Groundcover vendor No. 490

extraction from the global working class, including the corruption of public funds and the revolving door of the corporate state, is driving the people of poor third world countries to the first world, the core capitalist countries. Simultaneously, first world countries are turning into third world societies as supremacist elites invest in robots and artificial intelligence in order to maximize profits. Human beings become commodities in financial speculation. Pension funds become investors' toys. It can easily feel like one struggle, too many fronts, as we experience the results of our individual and collective actions.

My 80th year is full of health challenges that shook me to the core, especially the acute chronic bladder retention that required an ER trip and a catheter for 10 days. I had to postpone a trip to Cuba. When the retention persisted. I was given the choice to do 10 more days or self catheterize three

times a day for 10 days. I chose the "hands on" option and was in the clear after several successful self-catheterizations. I was able to go to Cuba and deepen the core family of Daniela, the mother I have known since her birth, and Santiago Alberto, our shared son, who will be four years old on November 9 this year. Mother and son are both my "ahijados," so I am a mentor, protector and spiritual friend. This is common in Cuban culture and promotes a deep and stable family.

Daniela began meditating with me in 2006 when I was doing an Amitabha Buddhist retreat in Cuba. My niece Jayme, 23-years-old then, got a virus in her brain stem and went into a coma. I put her in the center of my meditation and Daniela sat with me and we went into profound meditative states, "at one with reality!" What a blessing. Our bond deepened when she announced that she wanted to live with me until I die. As I look at my 81st birthday, that offer is taking on new life as we live in the dialectic of change and what it means to "serve the people," an important value that was widespread in the 60s and 70s and is reappearing today as we work in this world.

I talked in 2017 about doing volunteer work at Karma Triyana Dharmachakra, the monastery in Woodstock, New York. Complex challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, changed everything. Daniela did express the intention to live with and care for me until I die,

once telling me that when I die I will be reborn to her.

We plan to live together and I have an account with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to promote her immigration to Ann Arbor. I do not have the income to qualify as a sponsor but do have support from a backup sponsor which should pass bureaucratic review.

Emigration from Cuba is challenging because of visa policies and high ticket prices due to corporate gouging. If the United States would end the blockade, which is an act of war, travel would be easier and emigration less likely. The American people are pretty oblivious to the results of U.S. foreign policy. Haiti is the showcase example of what can happen if you resist colonial or imperialist rule. The election of Aristede in Haiti was not accepted by the "rules-based order" of investor elites. You may recall that coup d'etat.

I hope you read "The People Are The Power" in the August edition of Groundcover News. I believe that perspective will help us "serve the people" in the difficult times before us. I also hope that we look back on the International Day of Peace as we move into the era when we "Compost War and Grow Peace." "The harvest is great and the laborers are few" as Jesus put it. Let's take the breath that empowers us to connect and do something good. Let's plan to celebrate my 81st birthday and the Day of Che on October 8th.

Truth or lies: The Quest

Throughout the history of human-kind people have searched from mountain plateau to every forest floor looking for the fountain of youth. In 1722 King George I of Great Britain had a secret exploration commission. He hired his dear friend, Thomas Chatham, and wife, Sabrina. He gave Thomas the best ship he owned, along with a crew of 30 men and seven women. Thomas's job was to explore the world north, south, east and west for 10 years in search of the fountain of youth.

King George I never understood how far they could travel, or if they could even go across the world. However, he tried to prepare them as best as he could. He gave them instruments and mapping charts, navigational tools and all the food supplies the ship could carry. He even supplied them with gold, rubies and diamonds for trade, and weapons to protect themselves. He sent his best archers and fighters as part of the crew, to protect the ship and his cargo. In hopes of not attracting pirates, he named the ship the Explorer.

King George I trusted in Thomas,



FELICIA WILBERT
Groundcover vendor No. 234

who was really his third cousin by marriage. They grew up together; Thomas' mother was George's father's servant. King George I knew he was ill. However, he never let anyone know how sick he really was. His confidence was in Thomas, and finding the fountain of youth, in order to heal himself. He had heard rumors of how the fountain would heal his body and restore his youth.

Thomas and his crew left Great Britain in 1722 heading east. He documented and charted every island, mountain and body of water they traveled through. The first two years of

Thomas's adventure went well, until they were stranded on an uncharted island for six months. After repairing the ship, they left the island heading southwest.

Time passed swiftly. After five years he traveled to over 100 islands, still not finding the fountain of youth. After the seventh year, he finally landed in Canada. He was surprised to find out that King George had died two years earlier.

One night while in Canada, his wife was sitting by the fire and had a vision. She saw the fountain of youth. It was a pool with words pouring out of it. The words were from God, explaining how to conduct your life in order to have eternal life. She rushed to her husband's side and requested his attention. Sitting down in their quarters she

explained to him about her vision. She told him how she had seen the fountain of youth and how it was spewing out words. Her interpretation was that it is God's plan for us to have eternal life with Him, and while we are here He preserves us.

Thomas's wife said, "Enough is enough, I'm tired of traveling, and you need to understand the word of God. The only fountain of youth is his preservation for us. Let's not chase at the rumors and instead hold on to God's word."

After contemplating his wife's words, Thomas sold his ship and purchased land. They built a house for every family who was willing to stay. They settled in Canada and raised their family of three children until God came for them.



Thank you Truth Or Lies readers, but you voted wrong! "Randy the Racer," published June 16, was LIES. Vote on whether or not "The Quest" is Truth or Lies at groundcovernews.org

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		3	2	7				4
			4	6	5			
7				3	8	5		
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	8							3
	3				1	6		

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

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The following is our **Vendor Code of Conduct**, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

- Groundcover will be a voluntary purchase. I agree not to ask for more than the cover price or solicit donations by any other means.
- When selling Groundcover, I will always have the current biweekly issue of Groundcover available for customer purchase.
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Gridiron Groaners

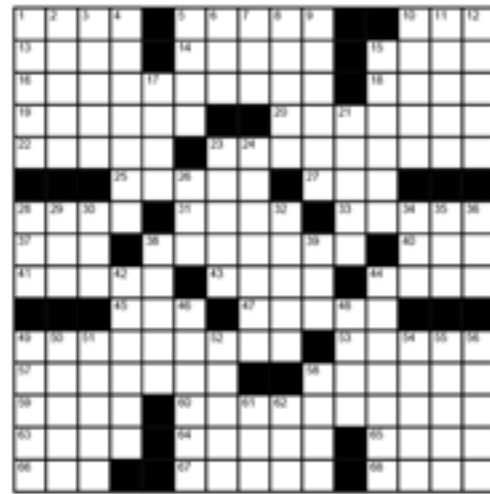
by Tracy Bennett

ACROSS

- 1 Illegal move by a pitcher
- 5 Understand
- 10 English channel
- 13 vera
- 14 Milk, in Madrid
- 15 Mobile phone, casually
- 16 Cold-weather wear for a member of the chain crew?
- 18 Annual theater award
- 19 Wunderkind
- 20 Sun Devils state
- 22 Hard-to-find cards, to collectors
- 23 Medal awarded for a two-point play?
- 25 Do a computer coder's job
- 27 Fighting Tigers sch.
- 28 Not at all certain
- 31 Irish dance style
- 33 Detroit ___ House ("Madame Butterfly" venue)
- 37 Word on a Halloween card
- 38 Unimpressive defensive maneuver?
- 40 Come together, as plans
- 41 Deserve
- 43 Enjoys brunch, say
- 44 Worked on the web?
- 45 Zero, in soccer
- 47 Company with a spokeslizard
- 49 Certain lineman's package?
- 53 "Oceans Eleven" caper
- 59 Cordon ___
- 60 Hike for a redhead?
- 63 Dancer's move
- 64 Marriage, for one
- 65 "8 ___" (Eminem film)
- 66 Crumb-carrying insect
- 67 "Jeepers!"
- 68 Finless fish

DOWN

- 1 Damaging media coverage, for short
- 2 Hilo hello
- 3 Bring down, as a flag
- 4 President on a half dollar
- 5 Glitzy rock genre
- 6 Parks & ___
- 7 "Jeepers!"
- 8 Reaper's bundle
- 9 Far-flying seabird
- 10 Bouncy jazz style
- 11 Russian pancakes
- 12 Off drugs, say
- 15 Get close for a smuggle
- 17 Cusano of the Detroit Tigers
- 21 "No worries"
- 23 Soft leather
- 24 Many moons past
- 26 Item with cups and straps
- 28 Company nicknamed Big Blue
- 29 Friend alternative
- 30 Word ___ word
- 32 Glove material
- 34 Sense of self that may get inflated
- 35 Gun, as an engine
- 36 HOMES Brewery offering
- 38 One of a pair employed by a "tall" carnival worker
- 39 Forensic inits.
- 42 Gets numerous tattoos
- 44 Pity party lament
- 46 Michigan ___ (student union building)
- 48 Scorch a bit
- 49 Raga drum
- 50 Michigan-born jazz piano great
- 51 Sports stud?
- 52 Carry along
- 54 Navel variety
- 55 Risk getting a delay of game call, maybe
- 56 Uses an old Selectric
- 58 Lair
- 61 "Candyman" director DaCosta
- 62 Indirect receiver of a Hail Mary



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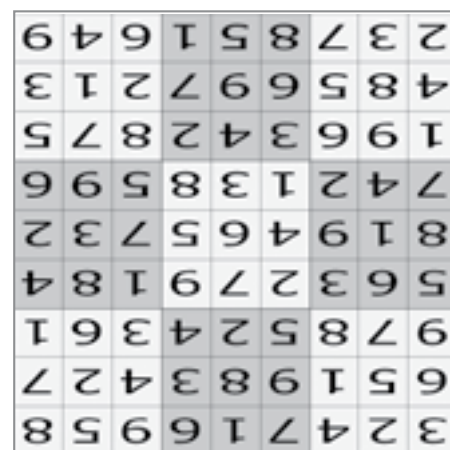
SEPTEMBER 2023 EVENTS AT BETHLEHEM

Please visit the church website at: bethlehem-ucc.org for the most up-to-date calendar and event information.



Sunday Worship Time
10:00 am In-person
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PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



No-knead soda bread

LUIZA DUARTE CAETANO
Groundcover contributor

Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour and some more for dusting
½ tsp baking soda
½ tsp salt
¾ cup buttermilk or yogurt

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 400F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Mix all the ingredients in a bowl using a wooden spoon or spatula.

Dust a flat surface with some flour and roll the dough onto it, shaping it into a ball.

Place the bread on the baking sheet and make two cuts across it with a



sharp knife.

Bake for about 30 min or until the bread sounds hollow when you tap the bottom. Eat on the same day or freeze, sliced or whole.

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